



# network

The UN Women's Newsletter, Vol. 9, No. 4 • October, November, December 2005

## Letter from the Focal Point for Women

Dear Readers,

With pleasure we bring to your desk and screens the last quarterly issue of *network* for the year 2005.

The issue contains several interesting items. However, unlike in all previous years, the reporting of the Secretary-General's Report on the Improvement of the Status of Women at the UN is conspicuous by its absence. The General Assembly, in its attempt at streamlining, resolved, in 2004, to request the report every two years instead of every one. Hence, our office will next report to the General Assembly in its sixty-first session in September 2006. Nevertheless, to keep you abreast we have a short synopsis of the status of women as at June 2006. As you will note, progress in gender balance remains limited.

But, we have faith. With the support of the entire constituency, progress and parity is inevitable. Surely, it will all arrive.

In solidarity,

Aparna Mehrotra

## INTERVIEW WITH MS. ALBINA DU BOISROUVRAY

Founder and President of the Association François-Xavier Bagnoud

by Rebeca Dain

Albina du Boisrouvray studied psychology and philosophy at the University of Sorbonne in Paris, France. She worked as a journalist and, in 1970, together with Juan Goytisolo, founded *Libre*, a literary magazine. In



Albina du Boisrouvray with children in India.

1969, she established Albina Productions, a film company that produced several movies and for which she was made in 1985 "Chevalier des Arts et Lettres". She also became the first film producer to be awarded "L'Ordre National du Mérite". Since 1980, Ms. du Boisrouvray has been the Chairperson of SEGH, a family real estate and hotel

properties group. She founded, in 1989, the Association François-Xavier Bagnoud (AFXB), an international non-governmental organization that focuses on the AIDS crisis and its orphans, and has programmes in 17 countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia, Europe and North America. In 1992, Albina du Boisrouvray established the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights at the Harvard School of Public Health based on the work of the late Dr. Jonathan Mann. She has received various awards for her humanitarian work. In 1996, she was made a John Harvard Fellow by Harvard University and, in 2001, Ms. Du Boisrouvray received the "Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur" by the French Government for her pioneering work in home palliative care projects.

**Q:** Please share with us your education, work experience.

**A:** My mother's family came originally from Bolivia, and my father from France. After spending my childhood years in New York and my adolescence as a citizen of the world, I settled in Switzerland and after the birth of my son François-Xavier in 1961, I studied psychology and philosophy at the University of Sorbonne in Paris. Then, I started working as a freelance journalist. I am especially proud of my journalistic wire on the circumstances surrounding the death of Che Guevara, which was

used by L'Express and by French and Scandinavian television channels. However, with a small child I felt I was taking extraordinary risks to cover the news and decided to change career track to spend more time with my son. In 1970 together with Juan Goytisolo, we founded *Libre*, a literary magazine that published

***“To me the idea of charity is not acceptable; one needs to attack the social ills.”***

the works of several Latin American writers, including Nobel Laureates Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Octavio Paz. From 1969 to 1986, I established and ran a film company Albina Productions that produced 22 movies. I

have been managing SEGH, a family real estate and hotel properties group, as its chairperson, since 1980 after my father's death.

My only son, François-Xavier Bagnoud, became a helicopter rescue pilot. He died in Mali during a mission in 1989 at 24 years of age. Right after his death, I joined Dr. Bernard Kouchner, the then head of *Médecins sans Frontières*, to work on a humanitarian mission in Lebanon, and later volunteered with *Doctors of the World-France* for two years. I have always been an activist and after my son's death I sold my film-producing company as well as most of my personal assets and founded the Association François-Xavier Bagnoud (AFXB), an international non-governmental organization, with personal funds, to perpetuate the compassion and generosity that guided François's life and his commitment and passion to rescue people.

From then on, I have devoted all my energy, credibility and experience to humanitarian service, social development and poverty redress through the creation of multiple projects throughout the world.

**Q: Would you explain to our readers the concept of “social entrepreneur” and why you decided to become one?**

**A:** A social entrepreneur sees possibilities where others see problems and crises. The goal is to help people become sustainable, not by doing and giving charity but by empowering them to take control of their lives, socially and financially. It is also applying innovative solutions to social, economic, health and environmental issues among others, empowering people and communities to envision and create positive change. Most of the problems that affect our societies are based on the inequalities between the rich and the poor. It is imperative to come up with creative, quick, effective and sustainable solutions. My son taught me the importance of helping others, and I have been lucky to discuss these issues with different social entrepreneurs, one of whom, Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank, had a great impact on my thinking. He taught me that you can really rely on women because they are strong and hard-working. They are worth investing in. Microfinance is often considered one of the more effective and flexible strategies in the fight against global poverty. It is sustainable and can be implemented on a massive scale, necessary to respond to the urgent needs of the poor. Studies have shown that women are more likely to reinvest their earnings in the business and in their families. Families cross the poverty line and microbusinesses expand, their communities benefit. Jobs are created, knowledge is shared, civic participation increases, and women are recognized as valuable members of their families and communities. My commitment is to rescue people from compounded poverty and economic distress due to AIDS, by empowering them and giving them income-generating activities, not in the form of loans but one-time in kind grants. To me the idea of charity is not acceptable; one needs to attack the social ills. In this work a compassion component is necessary, but it also requires good governance. It is very important for a social entrepreneur to have not only political skills but a thorough knowledge of business. Business involves venture capital, returns and social returns, which in reality is almost like dealing with microgov-

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ernance. Through my experience, I believe that giving women jobs is empowering those who uphold the social structures of societies in time of crisis.

**Q:** *You set up an organization dedicated to AIDS orphans and advocacy. Can you tell us why you chose this field out of so many other social problems facing the world at large?*

**A:** At the time I first focused on the AIDS crisis a long time ago in the late 1980s, it was a disaster emerging. The pandemic had just begun startling the whole world and there was just so much denial. I like a challenge and it is more energizing to work on a challenging issue where you can make a difference than if you are just plodding along with what is being done. The foundation had enough money. But we needed to be cautious in how to spend it. Through my association with Dr. Kouchner I learned that we have the right to interfere, to go where Governments could not go to fill the gaps. AFXB has the AIDS crisis and its orphans as its main focus and it leads 87 programmes in 17 countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia, Europe and in the United States. AFXB also lobbies for AIDS orphans because we believe that if they are denied help, society at large is denying them the possibilities of becoming good citizens. Children should be an issue in and of themselves as they are the worst affected by the epidemic.

In 1992, based on the work of the late Dr. Jonathan Mann, I also established the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights at the Harvard School of Public Health. Dr. Mann emphasized the linkage between health and human rights, which is a great tool for the eradication of poverty. Building on women and advocating for women's and children's rights became AFXB's goal. I believed that our organization is a wonderful tool not only to promote human rights and have an impact on health but to help women become sustainable and break away from the cycle of poverty. When we visit the different locations, we always ask those present what assistance they would like to receive to become self-sufficient. AFXB gives small grants to women instead of loans. The women start some kind of income-generating activity with the advice of the community.

**Q:** *How do you resolve the tension between private entrepreneurship and philanthropy?*

**A:** It all ties together! A foundation has an endowment programme and seed money and needs to put the money to work and see results. The structure and skills of business helped me tremendously in becoming a social entrepreneur and I do not see a conflict at all if you want to participate in good microgovernance in partnership with people. To the contrary, in order to run a successful NGO one needs to have good business skills. Political activism, entrepreneurial skills and leadership are necessary to counteract the root causes of poverty. Because of the innovative cost-effective projects that were formulated and directed in AFXB, I was selected a member of the Social Entrepreneurs Group of the Schwab Foundation. This recognition enables the 54 social entrepreneurs of the group to participate in the Davos World Economic Forum and to present and share their expertise with world business leaders in the civil and public sectors, creating stronger links between the private business world and the political leadership. As a woman, it has not been easy to have my voice heard, but I keep trying and sometimes with great success.

**Q:** *What personal and career experiences have influenced your understanding and vision regarding the situation of women? What progress do you feel you have witnessed?*

**A:** At the beginning of my life I felt handicapped as the youngest girl in a very large Latin American family. I had to fight hard for my space and recognition in a very "macho" environment. It was not easy. However, through the years I have seen the beginning of economic empowerment of women, without which women cannot win their freedoms. Roles have changed and women have come so far. Before, men were the main breadwinners in the family and women had to obey them; now women are earning better and men have to adapt to this new economic parity. Sometimes the women are earning more than the men! Of course, this happens in the Western world. In the rest of the world progress has been slower. However, there is now better understanding of human and women's rights.

**Q:** *From lessons learned in your work, what measures are needed to improve the social and economic conditions of women with regard to*



***discrimination, poverty, illiteracy, AIDS, prostitution and child soldiering, among other issues?***

**A:** I believe that there is need to scale down on problems. There are too many blueprints and ready made solutions. Information and solutions trickle from the top down but not the reverse, unfortunately. The international community should work more in partnership with NGOs and community-based organizations helping people. Better partnerships should be sought and built between donors and recipients, whose needs must shape programmes accordingly. While sometimes it may not be possible to get down to the small details, the international community should try to pay more attention to the individuals. Also, problems should not be amalgamated into big titles, but dealt with separately.

**Q:** *You are a very successful woman in mostly male environments. As an entrepreneur and head of an NGO, what, if any, were the obstacles you*

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***“Don't ever give up! Challenge your abilities. Continue with resilience.”***

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***faced at each step of your career, and in particular when you established your foundation?***

**A:** Throughout my career, I felt that my being a woman was sometimes a problem, but also an asset. In certain

fields the most important thing is power. If you do not have power, nobody pays attention to you and nobody listens! Although parity seems to exist in certain fields, we do not see many women media moguls; few magazines and newspapers are in the hands of women. In order to influence attitudinal change, women should be utilizing the media and influencing world opinion.

**Q:** *Do you think women in leadership positions make a difference in the working environment?*

**A:** Absolutely yes! When you see groups of women working together, particularly in the field, there is a sense of sorority. But when women are in power, it seems hard for them not to copy the male's style; yet, we women are more empathetic, sustainable, nurturing and resilient. Somebody said that “men are made for emergencies, while women are for the long haul”. Men are very able at abstract leadership while women through empathy can take and understand different

problems. Women should draw more on their more feminine traits and not try to imitate men.

**Q:** *Are you of the view that women seem to have weaker networks compared to the “old boys” networks?*

**A:** Somehow yes, but it also depends on the social/business context. I found through my travels that women in villages and countryside know how to network. But in general, I believe that men have better networks than women and my first exposure to that was when I was in college. I saw the beginning of the networks in the fraternities. And these continued throughout their business careers. Although women also have sororities, the concept does not translate to women as well. I strongly think that colleges are the grounds to establish future networks and women should use them to the fullest. In the end, however, it does not depend so much on your gender, but on your energy and commitment.

**Q:** *What were the most important professional and personal decisions you had to make to find balance in your personal and working life?*

**A:** I have always liked new challenges, but women more often than not need to make choices and choose the timing for their careers! I found early on that I needed to make choices between my working career and my personal life. It is still very hard for women to go all the way to the top while caring for children and families, if we want to spend quality time with them. Personally, looking back, I have no regrets.

**Q:** *Can you share with network the personal philosophy which has most contributed to your career and which has guided you personally in difficult moments?*

**A:** Don't ever give up! Challenge your abilities. Continue with resilience. Have principles that you won't compromise, such as integrity. Don't sell yourself short. Defend your convictions. Be courageous; face painful things, confront them and go beyond them. If you are transparent, have the courage to defend your territory. When you want something, wait until the right moment and go for it. Don't have an ego, have strength, conviction and courage. Compromise only with what you can live, not with your conscience.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO

### UN related

- Ms. **Patricia Francis** (Jamaica) for her appointment as Executive Director of the International Trade Centre (ITC), the joint technical cooperation agency of UNCTAD and the World Trade Organization (WTO) for business aspects of trade development, on 15 November 2005. Ms. Francis has extensive management experience in the fields of trade promotion and technical assistance to developing countries and will have an important role to play in further developing the International Trade Centre, whose mission is to help to promote exports of developing countries and countries in transition. Among others, she served as president of JAMPRO, Jamaica Promotions Corporation, for the past 10 years, and was formerly president of the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies. She has worked with ITC to develop a national export strategy for Jamaica and was also chair of the China-Caribbean Business Forum. As a management consultant she advised Latin American and Caribbean countries. Ms. Francis will start her three-year term in June 2006.
- Ms. **Alicia Barcena Ibarra** (Mexico) for her appointment as Assistant Secretary-General to the post of Deputy Chef de Cabinet in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General on 8 December 2005. She had last served as Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and had previously served as Coordinator of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Ms. Barcena Ibarra was Director-General of the National Institute of Fisheries and the first Vice-Minister of Ecology of Mexico.
- Ms. **Rebeca Grynspan** (Costa Rica) for her appointment as Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean on 30 December 2005. Ms. Grynspan was previously the director of the subregional Headquarters in Mexico of the Economic Commission for Latin America

and the Caribbean (ECLAC). She has also served as a member of the UN Millennium Project's Task Force on Poverty and Economic Development. Ms. Grynspan was the Vice President of Costa Rica from 1994 to 1998.

- Ms. **Alice Hecht** (Belgium) for her appointment as Chief of Protocol on 17 January 2006. Ms. Hecht was the former head of the Division of Administration of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and has worked in different offices in the UN common system. She succeeds Aminata Djermakoye, who will be returning to the UN headquarters in Geneva.

### UN bodies

- The composition of the **High-Level Group for the Alliance of Civilizations** was announced by the Secretary-General on 2 September 2005. The members have been identified through extensive consultations with specialists in the field of intercivilizational and intercultural relations. The initiative responds to a broad consensus across nations, cultures and religions that all societies are interdependent, bound together in their development and security, and in their environmental, economic and financial well-being. The Alliance seeks to forge collective political will and to mobilize concerted action at the institutional and civil society levels to overcome the prejudice, misperceptions and polarization that militate against such a consensus. Its main goals are:

- To provide an assessment of new and emerging threats to international peace and security, in particular the political, social and religious forces that foment extremism;
- To identify collective actions, at both the institutional and civil society levels, to address these trends;
- To recommend a practicable programme of action for States, international organizations and civil society aimed at promoting harmony among societies.

Out of 20 appointments, there were four women nominated: Her Highness **Sheikha Mozah**

(Qatar), Consort of the Emir of the State of Qatar and Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development; Ms. **Karen Armstrong** (United Kingdom), Historian of Religion; Dr. **Nafis Sadik** (Pakistan), Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General; and Ms. **Shobana Bhartia** (India), Managing Director of the Hindustan Times, New Delhi.

## Others

- Ms. **Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf** was sworn in on 16 January 2006 as **Liberia's** President and Africa's first elected woman Head of State. Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf is a former banker and Assistant Secretary-General of the UN Development Programme (UNDP).
- 
- President of Liberia,  
Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf*
- Ms. **Michelle Bachelet** was elected **Chile's** first woman President on 16 January 2006. She is a former Health and Defense Minister under the former President. She pledged that there will be gender parity in her cabinet.
  - Ms. **Ritt Bjerregaard** (Denmark) was elected Copenhagen's new Lord Mayor on 16 November 2005 and took office on 1 January 2006. She is the former MP, minister and the European Commissioner for Environment, Nuclear Safety and Civil Protection in the Santer Commission from 1995 to 1999, representing Denmark.
  - Ms. **Hauwa Ibrahim** (Nigeria) received the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought on 13 December 2005. This prize was shared with **Reporters without Borders** and the Cuban protest group "**Damas de Blanco**" (Ladies in White). The Ladies in White have met every Sunday since the 2003 crackdown to protest the imprisonment of their husbands, sons and brothers, who regularly faced abuse and sometimes violence. The Sakharov Prize is the top human rights award of the European Parliament. It recognizes achievement in the field of human rights, protection of minorities, defense of international cooperation and the development of democracy and the rule of law.

## AROUND THE UN...

- The **2005 World Summit**. The Summit was held in New York, from 14 to 16 September 2005, and gathered more than 170 Heads of State and Government to review and pronounce on development, security, human rights and the reform of the UN. The **Summit Outcome** document reaffirms that progress for women is progress for all. It also reiterates the need to take measures to promote gender equality and to eliminate pervasive gender discrimination by eliminating inequality in primary and secondary education; guaranteeing women's right to own and inherit property; ensuring equal access to reproductive health; ensuring women's equal access to labour markets and productive assets and resources; eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women and the girl child; and promoting increased representation of women in Government decision-making bodies. The Summit also recognized the importance of gender mainstreaming for achieving gender equality, and undertook to actively promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres.
- The **Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC)** and the **Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO)** together with the **UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)** organized the first Islamic Ministerial Conference of the Child in Rabat, Morocco, 8-9 November 2005. The conference gathered ministers from nearly 50 Islamic countries to discuss how to end harmful traditional practices including child marriage, female mutilation and gender discrimination in education. The declaration issued at the end of the conference urged action to address the unacceptably high rates of child and maternal mortality in some Islamic countries.
- A conference organized by the **UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)** and the **European Commission** took place in Brussels, Belgium, on 11 November 2005. Approximately 130 experts met to highlight the **role of gender in develop-**

**ment assistance.** The conference discussed how increasingly aid allocations are driven by partnerships between donor and recipient countries and how women need to be included. Women, the participants concluded, are the key stakeholders in their country's development and Governments and donors ought to be more accountable for achieving gender equality in their implementation of development programmes. The conference served to follow-up on the three landmark events of 2005 that linked commitments to gender equality with development cooperation goals: the 10-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action, the adoption of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2005 World Summit.

- The **Third Committee** (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) approved, on 11 November 2005, without a vote, five draft resolutions on a wide range of issues, including social development, the **advancement of women**, promotion and protection of children's rights and human rights questions. With the text on "**the girl child**", the General Assembly urged States to ensure full human rights and fundamental freedoms for girls through all necessary measures, including legal reforms, and to mainstream a gender perspective in all development policies and programmes. That would include promoting gender equality and equal access for girls to such basic social services as education, nutrition, health care, including sexual and reproductive health care, vaccinations and protection from major killer diseases, as well as protecting girls affected by armed conflicts through humanitarian assistance.
- The 10th anniversary of the **International Day for Tolerance** was celebrated on 16 November 2005. Activities around the UN were directed at advocacy for the wider public. This day was established at the initiative of the General Conference of UNESCO on 16 November 1995 where UNESCO Member States adopted the *Declaration of Principles on Tolerance* and the *Follow-up Plan of Action* for the Year. The 2005 World Summit Outcome document (A/RES/60/1), outlines the commitment of Heads of State and Government to advance human welfare, freedom and progress everywhere, as well as to encourage tolerance, respect, dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples.
- The **Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs** (OCHA) said on 10 November 2005 that there is an **urgent need for female medical staff** in earthquake devastated regions in Pakistan. On account of culture and tradition women in the region prefer to be treated by other women.
- Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States **Anwarul K. Chowdhury** raised alarm over growing "feminization" of poverty during a meeting of the Economic and Financial (Second) Committee of the General Assembly on 14 November 2005. The international community should pay special attention to the **challenges of job creation, gender mainstreaming and human capacity development** in the world's poorest and most vulnerable countries. Sub-Saharan Africa, where most of the world's 50 least developed countries can be found, has the highest level of working poor. More than half of all people with jobs in the region are still forced to live on less than \$1 a day.
- The United Nations marked the **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women** on 25 November 2005 with calls for Member States to take legal action against the global scourge, for societies to change a mindset that permits such abuse, and for women themselves to stand up and speak out against a culture of shame.
- The **International Atomic Energy Agency** (IAEA) announced on 25 November 2005 that part of the Nobel Peace award would be used to create a fund for **fellowship and training to improve cancer management and childhood nutrition in the developing world**. The share of the prize awarded in British pounds (520,000) will be allocated for fellowship awards to target young professionals, particularly women, from developing Member States, through the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme. The Agency proposed organizing training courses in regional centres in Africa, Asia and Latin America.



- The conference **Violence against women, abandoning female genital mutilation: the role of Parliaments** was held in Dakar, Senegal, from 4 to 5 December 2005. It was organized by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) along with the National Assembly of Senegal and the African Parliamentary Union (APU) in cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). African parliamentarians together with religious and traditional leaders discussed the ways of ending the dangerous practice of female genital cutting that violates the fundamental human rights of about 3 million girls in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. While progress towards abandoning female genital mutilation has been painfully slow, experts are optimistic that, with adequate support from a broad range of institutions, including national parliaments, the practice can be eliminated within just one generation.
- For the first time in the history of both entities, on 14 December 2005, the Directors of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) signed a **memorandum of understanding to increase their cooperation towards the achievement of their common objectives of promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women**. This agreement was conceived in part as a response to the conclusions of the review and appraisal of the Beijing Conference, contained in the Declaration issued by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session (28 February–11 March 2005) ([www.un-instraw.org](http://www.un-instraw.org)).

as sexist. In 2003, women far outnumbered men in advertising agencies, accounting for 65.8 per cent of the work force, but the status of women declines with each step up the corporate ladder. Women hold 76.7 per cent of all clerical positions and 58.2 per cent of all professional positions, but in middle to upper management they hold only 29.5 per cent (data from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, U.S.). However, this is changing. Women have been helped by their women clients in marketing and management roles.

- The meeting of the **International Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision** took place in Morella, Mexico. The network was conceived of as a “**forum to which journalists may come as individuals or collectively, from all over the world, with the purpose of promoting journalism with a gender perspective**”. The network is also committed to the promotion of women to editorial positions, the creation of labour exchanges for women journalists, and training in gender issues and new technologies. The meeting gathered more than 100 journalists from 14 countries. The participants have started to network among other things in an effort to find ways around censorship, give gender equality greater prominence in the media, and promote the use of non-sexist language. Women account for more than half of the global population, and yet they are the protagonists in only 18 per cent of the news.
- During the month of December 2005, the **South African Parliament** agreed to ban **virginity testing**, with violations punishable by up to 10 years in prison. The ban restricts testing to girls 16 and over who give consent. The ban is an example of how sub-Saharan Africa is slowly, but inexorably, enshrining into law basic protections that have long been denied to women. In a region where nearly half of its women are illiterate and courts and legal aid are often remote, it is often tribal leaders, not members of Parliament, who decide what is law. However, women are making solid gains toward equality in the continent; women's equality commissions are widespread in around 48 nations. Mr. **Stephen Lewis**, the UN special envoy to Africa on AIDS and a campaigner against inequalities between men and women, has repeat-

## AROUND THE WORLD: GENDER NEWS

- Women still have a long way to go in the **advertising world**, especially as creative directors. Among the 33 top agencies only 4 have offices with female creative directors. The dominance of men on the creative side is even more striking considering that women commonly make up to 80 per cent of household purchasing decisions, according to the Polling Company in Washington, D.C., U.S. Some experts say the gender imbalance helps explain why some advertising is perceived in polls and focus groups



edly noted that **women need their own version of UNICEF. What is missing in the UN, he said, “is a powerful women’s international agency that emerges and just takes the world on”.**

- A leading international women’s rights group **Equality Now** ([www.equalitynow.org](http://www.equalitynow.org)) that works for the promotion and protection of women’s rights, including political representation and economic development, launched a campaign on 13 December 2005 calling on the UN Security Council **to consider a woman candidate for the post of the next Secretary-General**. Equality Now drew and presented a list of 18 highly qualified women leaders. The selection of a woman candidate will send a signal to younger women that there is a place for them in positions of leadership and would reflect a world which is more just and more equal. The United Nations has never had a female Secretary-General in its history.

## IN YOUR INTEREST

### Reports

- **The State of the World’s Children 2006: Excluded and Invisible** prepared by the UN Children’s Fund was launched on 14 December 2005. The report is a sweeping assessment of the world’s most vulnerable children and names four principal culprits:
  - **Lack of formal identity**—every year half of all births in the development world (excluding China) go unregistered denying children the right to an education, good healthcare and other basic services;
  - **Lack of parental care**—millions of orphans, street children and those in detention are growing up without the protection of a family;
  - **Imposition of adult roles**—children are forced into adult roles too early; about 80 million girls in the developing world will be married before they turn 18, and 171 million children work in hazardous conditions, including factories, mines and agriculture;
  - **Exploitation**—some 8.4 million children work in the worst forms of child labour, including

prostitution and debt bondage; nearly 2 million are used in the commercial sex trade and a vast but unknown number are exploited as domestic servants in private homes.

- **“Ending female genital mutilation and cutting in Senegal”**, a report by Sarah Crowe and Molly Melching, speaks on how millions of women and girls in Africa and the Middle East are at risk of some form of female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C) every year. It details the countries where FGM/C is still practiced, and describes the most promising approaches to ensure that it is abandoned. The report was released on 25 November 2005 ([http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/senegal\\_30046.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/senegal_30046.html)).

### Secretary-General’s Bulletins, Information Circulars and others

- **Prevention of workplace harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority—online programme** (SGB/2005/20 of 28 November 2005) introduced an online learning programme, designed to raise awareness of the Organization’s zero tolerance of harassment and abuse of authority of any nature and provides guidance on related policies and procedures. The programme is mandatory for staff at all levels.
- **Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations** (SGB/2005/21 of 19 December 2005) outlined the policy aimed at ensuring that the UN functions in an open, transparent and fair manner, and addresses concerns raised by staff in last year’s integrity perception survey. It became effective on 1 January 2006.
- SGB/2005/22 of 30 December 2005 establishes the **Ethics Office**. It is one more step in ongoing efforts to monitor and ensure the highest standards of integrity of staff members in accordance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the UN Charter.

### Administrative Instructions

- **Revised salary scales for staff in the General Service and related categories at Headquarters**

(ST/IC/2005/61) provides interim adjustments to the salary scales.

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) launched, on 9 December 2005, two new publications on gender-based violence: **Broken Bodies—Broken Dreams: Violence against Women Exposed** and the **IASC Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Situations: Focusing on Sexual Violence in Emergencies**. Worldwide, one third of women have been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused. Women are the victims of violent acts of all kinds—from birth to old age. Globally women between 15 and 44 years are more likely to be injured or die as a result of male violence than through cancer, traffic accidents, malaria and war combined. The number of missing females—those that should currently be living, but are not because of discriminatory practices such as sex-selective abortions, female infanticide and fatal neglect of girls—is estimated to be 50-100 million. In conflict and war, their situation becomes worse.

## WORK-LIFE

### The daughter track

Summary of an article from  
*The New York Times* of 24 November 2005

Increasingly, women in the labour force are facing difficult choices between their working careers and their family obligations. More than ever before, career women are now choosing to stay home to care for elderly parents, who are no longer able to care for themselves.

This duty that in another era fell to the unmarried daughter, who never left home, is now being revisited by executive women, who decide to return home and care for parents in old age. This new filial role is what sociologists are beginning to call “the daughter track”. Although women bear a disproportionate burden for elder

care, and often leave jobs, either temporarily or permanently when needed to care for parents, few women could have imagined doing this and doing it by choice. Women feel that they can make a difference and middle-aged women may see leaving a high-powered career as an opportunity to change careers and look for more personal satisfaction outside the work environment.

Despite a growing number of men helping aging relatives, women account for 71 per cent of those devoting 40 or more hours a week to the task, according to the USA National Alliance for Caregiving and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) in a 2004 study. Never before have so many parents needed their adult children to care for them, with long life expectancy and disabling conditions such as Alzheimer's disease. Therefore, employers are slowly recognizing this burden and corporations are beginning to pay attention to these challenges in trying to facilitate leaves of absences and return to work.

## WOMEN'S HEALTH

- Until the National Institute of Health (NIH), America's largest funder of biomedical research required scientists to include women in their studies in 1993, it was generally assumed that data gained from clinical research on men would apply also to women. The **Women's Health Research Program at Yale (WHRY)** is proving that assumption false. The programme aims to close the **gender gap in biomedical research** and is directed towards supporting pilot studies focusing on health issues unique to or more common in women, and on sex differences in health and disease. WHRY also educates the public through its informative website ([www.yalewhr.org](http://www.yalewhr.org)) and producing publications on topics such as bone health and how to interpret research findings reported in the media.
- A new study sponsored by the National Cancer Institute of America found that **screening tests contribute to a pronounced drop in the death rate from breast cancer**. The study published by **The New England Journal of Medicine** on

27 October 2005 concludes that 28 to 65 per cent of the sharp decrease in breast cancer deaths from 1990 to 2000 was due to mammograms. The rest was attributed to powerful new drugs to treat breast cancer (<http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/abstract/331/22/1493>).

- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** marked **World Diabetes Day** on 14 November 2005 by pointing out that every 30 seconds a lower limb is lost to the disease somewhere in the world. It is estimated that more than 170 million people are suffering from diabetes globally and this number is expected to double by 2030. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented by addressing risk factors such as physical inactivity and overweight/obesity. Exercise and appropriately balanced eating habits are key to keeping healthier.

## RECOMMENDED READING

- **Women, Development and the UN** by Devaki Jain, published by Indiana University Press, and part of the UN Intellectual History Project, gives an account of how women and the UN have interacted with and influenced each other. It focuses on events that have helped steered the work of the UN on women. It examines also the role played by individual women and women's organizations in this interaction.

## WEBSITES

[www.iiav.nl/newsletter/](http://www.iiav.nl/newsletter/): The IIAV is the source, the intermediary and the supplier of information and documentation for all those who are interested in the position of women: on books, periodicals, data, addresses, archives, visual materials—current or historical, national or international.

[www.undp.org/gender/](http://www.undp.org/gender/): The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) website on gender issues, including current events, UNDP networks, studies, programmes and vacancies.

[www.womensenews.org/](http://www.womensenews.org/): Women's eNews is a source of substantive news on issues of particular concern to women, and their perspectives on public policy. It is aimed to assist women to enhance their ability to define their own lives

and to participate fully in every sector of human endeavor.

[www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/wps/](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/wps/): UN updates on implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

[www.un.org/ombudsman/](http://www.un.org/ombudsman/): Report on the activities of the office of the Ombudsman.

## E-MAILS FROM READERS

Greeting ladies,

21 November 2005

Dear all,

Great news about paternity leave! Norwegian TV reported on 21 November 2005 about a new Danish study (<http://www.dadcomehome.org/downloads/structure//Drews%20and%20Cybulski.pt#18>), which found that men perform markedly better at work following paternity leave. The longer the paternity leave, the better effect on their work! A male finance expert who had stayed at home for three months with his baby daughter was interviewed, and he confirmed that what he learned during paternity leave helped him do a better job in the office. His employer, a large IT company, has noticed the positive effect and is now encouraging all fathers to take paternity leave. This option is open to fathers in the Nordic countries but not all fathers make use of it. Both male and female researchers were interviewed in connection with the TV report, as well as the head of human resources in the company used to illustrate the findings (<http://politiken.dk/visArtikel.iasp?PageID=408967>). Sweden is also preparing a bill that would provide a separate paternity leave that could not be transferred to the mother. An earlier Swedish study revealed that paternity leave ensures better bonding between father and child and more positive results for the family in general if the mother is working while the father takes care of the child.

This is another example of how beneficial it is to society that parents share equally the responsibility for children. The UN should learn from this and introduce six months leave to mom and six months to dad, and ensure that they cannot take the leave together, except for a couple of weeks following childbirth or adoption.

Best regards,

Gry Tina Tinde, Gender Adviser, UNHCR



## Comparison of gender distribution of staff in the professional and higher categories with appointments of one year or more, as at 30 June 2004 and 30 June 2005

As of June 2005, women comprised 37.1 per cent of all staff in the professional and higher categories of the Secretariat with appointments of one year or more. This represents a decrease of 0.3 per cent since June 2004.

At the D-I level and above, the proportion of women in the Secretariat decreased from 29 per cent to 27.2 per cent (147 women out of 540) between 30 June 2004 and 30 June 2005.

Level	30 June 2004				30 June 2005				Difference in the number of women	Difference in the number of men	Women % Change
	Men	Women	Total	Women %	Men	Women	Total	Women %			
USG	30	6	36	16.7	31	6	37	16.2	0	1	-0.5
ASG	29	6	35	17.1	39	9	48	18.8	3	10	1.6
D-2	92	35	127	27.6	88	32	120	26.7	-3	-4	-0.9
D-1	216	103	319	32.3	235	100	335	29.9	-3	19	-2.4
<b>Subtotal</b>	367	150	517	29.0	393	147	540	27.2	-3	26	-1.8
P-5	602	271	873	31.0	643	295	938	31.4	24	41	0.4
P-4	1088	563	1651	34.1	1222	647	1869	34.6	84	134	0.5
P-3	984	698	1682	41.5	1068	743	1811	41.0	45	84	-0.5
P-2	293	303	596	50.8	292	302	594	50.8	-1	-1	0.0
P-1	1	5	6	83.3	0	2	2	100.0	-3	-1	16.7
<b>Subtotal</b>	2968	1840	4808	38.3	3225	1989	5214	38.1	149	257	-0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3335</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>5325</b>	<b>37.4</b>	<b>3618</b>	<b>2136</b>		<b>37.1</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>-0.2</b>

Source: United Nations OHRM.

You can read network online at  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/Network>  
 To receive hard copies of network please send an  
 e-mail request to [network-newsletter@un.org](mailto:network-newsletter@un.org)

You can find a monthly list of senior  
 vacancy announcements (P-5 and above)  
 at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/>

### network—The UN Women's Newsletter

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 Office of the Gender Adviser on the Advancement of Women (OSAGI)

#### Production:

Rebeca Dain, OSAGI/DESA

#### Design and Layout:

Graphic Design Unit, Outreach Division, DPI

#### Printed by

the United Nations Publishing Section, New York

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